UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/240
28 October 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Forty-eighth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM
IN THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

Letter dated 27 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and to request the inclusion in the agenda of the forty-eighth session of an additional item entitled "The situation in Burundi".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution are annexed to this letter. It is hoped that this item will be allocated to the plenary Assembly.

(Signed) Thérence SINUNGURUZA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

1. The international community will recall that on 1 June 1993 Presidential elections which were deemed to be properly and honestly conducted brought President Melchior Ndadaye to power. On 29 June 1993, legislative elections set up a National Assembly. On 10 July 1993, the President of the Republic was officially installed in office.

2. Burundi was thus one of the rare countries in Africa to embark on an exemplary transition to democracy.

3. Unfortunately, this democratic momentum has just been interrupted. On 21 October 1993, a group of soldiers, fearing neither God nor man, took the Presidential palace and the residences of some of Burundi's political leaders by storm.

4. During this putsch, the Head of State was assassinated, as were the President and Vice-President of the National Assembly. This left a political vacuum at the head of the State. The Minister of the Interior and the Director-General of National Documentation and Migration were also executed. The surviving members of the democratic Government escaped just in time by finding refuge in places inaccessible to the perpetrators of the putsch.

5. As a consequence of this state of affairs, the population has risen up and the old demons of ethnic division have been aroused, the demons which were believed to have been buried for ever in the dustbin of history. At a time when violence is currently ravaging the countryside of Burundi, the population is seeking refuge in the towns in insalubrious and precarious shelters, while many are seeking exile in neighbouring countries. The number of these displaced persons and refugees is estimated at more than 300,000.

6. According to current information, the violence is continuing and, if nothing is done to stop it, the country runs the risk of plunging into civil war with incalculable consequences for peace and international security.

7. The international community has unanimously denounced the putsch. The Security Council has just strongly condemned the coup d'état of 21 October 1993 and demanded a rapid return to constitutional order. 1/

8. It is essential that the General Assembly react quickly to this disturbing and illegal situation by associating itself with the people of Burundi in the tragedy caused by the putsch. At the same time, it should, as a matter of urgency, request the international community to intervene to restore the functioning of, and protect, the democratic institutions and provide emergency humanitarian assistance to Burundi.

1/ See S/26631.

APPENDIX

Draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Having considered the question entitled "The situation in Burundi",

Deeply concerned by the military coup d'état which took place in Burundi on 21 October 1993 and which has resulted in a brutal and violent interruption of the democratic process,

Distressed at the cowardly assassination of the President of the Republic and other political leaders,

Seriously disturbed by the tragic consequences of the coup d'état which is plunging Burundi into violence and causing loss of life and mass displacement of the population,

1. Unreservedly condemns the coup which has checked the democratic process initiated in Burundi;

2. Demands that the perpetrators of the putsch put down their arms and return to their barracks;

3. Considers that those responsible for the events which have taken place in Burundi since 21 October 1993 should be brought to justice;

4. Supports the efforts being made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the countries of the region to promote a return to constitutional order in Burundi;

5. Requests the States Members of the United Nations, international organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and/or any other assistance to Burundi;

6. Decides to remain seized of the matter until a solution to the crisis is found.